

SSG BACUP Supports May as Mental Health Awareness Month

By Kathleen Piché, Public Affairs Director



On Friday, May 27, 2016, [Benefits Assistance Clients' Urban Project](#) (BACUP) held an open house for clients and the community to support May as Mental Health Awareness Month. The benefits advocacy program and wellness center provides resources and is a place for individuals to reach health and wellness. BACUP is a division of Special Service for Groups (SSG) and prides itself on offering services that are entirely run by individuals in recovery from mental illnesses.

Many activities were planned throughout the day, including providing information on resources, creating illustrations, face painting, beauty corner, board games, balloon animals and raffles. Clients also participated in a dance-off with Hello Kitty and were treated to pizza and salad for lunch.

Jackie Long was a client who participated in the celebration. The following is her story:

"I was hooked on crack cocaine and was homeless for eleven years. I had been in and out of jail and had tried to kill myself several times, including setting myself on fire and cutting my wrists.

Ms. Younga interviewed me in jail and two weeks later (through AB 109), she came and got me! I now have a place to stay, have seen an M.D. and got meds. I'm coming to the center (BACUP) and have been sober for one year. I feel safe here. The groups helped me open up to my past. I'm now willing to talk about it.

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I had to learn that it was okay to be sober. Previously, I could not deal with the reality that I'd been molested as a girl—that's what brought it all on. That includes using and prostituting. I'm willing to talk about this—I can let go and forgive those who hurt me.

My goals are to keep working on me and to help elderly people.”



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